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Information Bulletin No. BC-2003-033  
Expires: 09/30/2003

To: All Washington Office and Field Officials  
Attn: All BLM Employees

From: Director, National Business Center

Subject: Mandatory Use of a Travel Management Center

**Program Area:** Travel

**Purpose:** This bulletin is to remind all the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) travelers that the Federal Travel Regulation 41 CFR 301-73.102, mandatory use of a Travel Management Center (TMC) for all common carrier, lodging and car rentals associated with government travel was effective January 1, 2001.

**Policy/Action:** The Department of the Interior (DOI) issued a travel advisory regarding mandatory use of a TMC. Please read the attachments for a full explanation of the regulation.

**Timeframe:** Effective immediately.

**Budget Impact:** None.

**Background:** The General Services Administration (GSA) is responsible for reporting all government travel information. One of the primary sources for them to receive information is from the TMCs that government agencies use. This regulation will improve the accuracy of the information GSA must report. It will also help to assure the BLM that we are complying with the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990.

**Manual/Handbook Sections Affected:** None.

**Coordination:** N/A.

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Signed by:  
Thomas F. Boyd  
Director, National Business Center

Authenticated by:  
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2 Attachments  
1 - DOI Travel Advisory  
2 – FTR 301-73.102 and 301-73.103

Distribution  
ST-150, BLM Library

**DOI Travel Advisory**  
**Mandatory Use of Travel Management Centers**  
**Beginning on January 1, 2001**

For many years, the General Services Administration has been encouraging Federal travelers to use Travel Management Centers (TMC's). The principal reasons for doing so are:

- TMC's are knowledgeable about Government travel requirements, and are in a position to provide valued guidance and assistance to travelers in making travel arrangements
- TMC's advise travelers of airline flight changes and cancellations, and make the necessary itinerary changes so that travel can be accomplished expeditiously. They can also adjust travel itineraries en-route, to accommodate plan changes.
- TMC's have the necessary systems and procedures in place to automatically process airline refunds for unused E-tickets, to ensure that funds associated with these tickets are expeditiously returned to agencies.
- GSA is responsible for the timely collection and reporting of Governmentwide travel information, and TMC's greatly facilitate this process.
- TMC's provide the Federal agencies they serve with comprehensive management reports relating to their Travel Programs.

Effective January 1, 2001, the Federal Travel Regulation (at 41 CFR 301- 73.102) makes it mandatory for Federal travelers to use Travel Management Centers for all official travel. This means that **all common carrier transportation, lodging accommodations and/or car rentals for official travel will need to be made through the Department's Travel Management Center (Omega World Travel)**. Failure to do so may subject travelers to a liability for additional travel costs that are not reimbursable.

The Department relies extensively on travel to accomplish its basic programmatic missions, and expects the quality of travel services provided by its TMC provider to be of the highest level possible. A web-based capability for reporting both positive and negative travel service experiences has been established, and employees are strongly encouraged to use this communication vehicle. The Customer Input form for reporting travel service experiences is also found on the Office of Financial Management's home page (refer to the Travel Management Center section at: <http://www.doi.gov/pfm/travel.html> ).

Attachment 1-1

## **Federal Travel Regulation 301-73.102**

Question:

Must we require travelers to use a travel management system?

Answer:

Yes, starting January 1, 2001, to implement the Hotel/Motel Fire Safety Act, as amended (see 5 U.S.C. 5707c). Until that time, you should encourage your travelers to use the travel management system selected by you for all common carrier, lodging, and car rental arrangements. Beginning January 1, 2001, you must require travelers to use the travel management system selected by you.

## **Federal Travel Regulation 301-73.103**

Question:

Are there any exceptions to this requirement?

Answer:

An agency head, or his/her designee, may exempt certain types of travel arrangements from the mandatory use of the travel management system. In certain situations, it may be impractical to make advance reservations, and therefore no reason exists to use a TMS.

